

ty 2040. THE EVENING STANDARD. Saturday, September 21, 1929.

# THE LONDONER'S DIARY.

## Broader Basis Needed in Stock Exchange Control—The Author of "All Quiet" Explains Why He Ignores His Traducers.

### Stock Exchange and the Public.

The week's events on the Stock Exchange suggest that the public would be greatly reassured if the Stock Exchange Committee were to take a much wider view of the scope of its own activities.

At present the Committee exercises extraordinary vigilance in protecting its own members against infringements by other members, but there is a widespread feeling that this vigilance should be extended so as to afford some measure of protection for shareholders.

In particular, the Committee should be more exacting with regard to the submitting of accounts by firms whose shares are dealt with on the Stock Exchange. Permission to deal should be accompanied by a stricter control of the publication of accounts.

### The Questionnaire.

I pointed out the other day that the sub-committee appointed by the National Union of Conservative Associations to conduct the questionnaire has not yet met. Now it is officially stated that the committee will meet shortly to consider replies received from various constituency associations, and will in due course make its own report to the executive.

The reference to the "due course" is quite in keeping with the leisurely spirit hitherto observed. No one has worried about the delay, because any expectation that valuable results would accrue from the inquiry were dissipated the very moment the names of the committee and the method of investigation were disclosed.

### Points of Criticism.

I note that the criticism of Conservative stalwarts is being directed to other channels. At the Welsh National Conservative Conference at Newport Mr. R. G. Clarry, the former M.P. for Newport, asserted that the party is losing touch with the views of the masses and demanded that the leaders should give full consideration to resolutions passed by Conservative conferences.

Mr. Clarry has always spoken with a certain freedom since his famous by-election victory at Newport, which was largely the means of encouraging the Conservatives to overthrow the Coalition in 1922.

### Things Left Undone.

Sir L. Forrester-Walker, the member for Monmouth, referred to the achievements of Socialist ministers. Mr. G. R. Hall Caine, the former member for East Dorset, also, I notice, draws attention to the work of Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Snowden, and Mr. Henderson, and states that the Government "Why were not these things done by the Conservative Government from 1924-29. The problems are not fresh problems; the solutions offered are not new and are certainly not Socialist."

"If they are right in September, 1929, why were they not right in May, 1929? There must be some reasons known to our leaders, but if they are wrong, if all these moves were considered by the late Conservative Government and decided against, surely we have a right to know why."

As such opinions are being very freely expressed, I am not surprised to hear that there are certain apprehensions regarding the proceedings at the forthcoming conference.

### Precedence at Washington.

"Free" countries like the Republican United States have far more troubles and heart-breaks about social precedence than we, with our long settled, flexible codes about which nobody is self-conscious, and the question of whether Miss Ishbel MacDonald may be taken in to dinner before Lady Isabella Howard is having serious discussion in Washington.

Happily the Prime Minister's daughter is a level-headed young lady who will preserve her equanimity in any event.

But let us hope that Washington will take the common-sense view that so important a guest as Mr. MacDonald will take the place of honour, and his daughter be given the corresponding lady's position.

Lady Isabella is a daughter of the eighth Earl of Newburgh and a sister of the present Earl, who is also Prince Guistiniani-Bandini, and usually lives in Rome.

### Germany's Lost Leaders.

Nowhere is the Austrian internal crisis being followed more closely than in Germany, and a successful coup by the Austrian Heimwehr could hardly fail to have certain repercussions in the Fatherland itself.

Since The Hague Conference the elements of disorder, both among the Nationalists and the Communists, have been increasing their activities. At the present moment their efforts cannot be described as serious. The vast majority of the German people "as a natural instinct for order, and all that it demands is peace and quiet in which to carry on its business."

What is serious, however, is the lack of leaders. German democracy has hardly produced a single statesman of even average ability, and if anything were to happen to President Hindenburg, who is eighty-two, and Herr Stresemann, who is a very sick man, the situation might become critical. Doubtless, however, the hour will produce the man.

### Remarque on Himself.

I hear from Erich Remarque, the thirty-one-year-old author of "All Quiet on the Western Front," that he has no intention of replying to the numerous attacks and calumnies that have been made upon him by those German Junkers who dislike his book for its anti-war tendencies.

Among other libels they have accused him—falsely of course—of having never been a soldier, of having stolen his manuscripts from dead comrades, and of having written his book to the order of the Entente!

### A Modest Author.

Remarque considers that replying to personal attacks is a proof of injured vanity and injured self-esteem. Self-esteem, however, can only be permitted to an author who has completed his life's work.

For himself, he considers that it would be ridiculous for him to claim to be a good author "because of a single book."

These remarks have a special interest for me, because when I met Remarque in Berlin some five months ago he seemed obsessed with the fear that he might never be able to write another book.

This dread of being labelled "a one-book author" haunts many writers. Obviously, Remarque himself has not yet overcome it. Indeed, he is almost too modest about his talents. Excessive modesty, however, is not a common fault among authors, and when it is sincere, as in Remarque's case, it is rather attractive.

### Admirals of the Turf.

Among the many references to the late Sir Hedworth Mox's racing activities, I note the statement that he furnished the first instance of an admiral taking a prominent position on the turf.

This is curiously inaccurate. One of the most famous racing figures of Victorian times was the late Admiral Rous, well known by the sobriquet "The Father of the Turf." His name is preserved at the Ascot meeting in the Rous Memorial Stakes.

The Admiral, who lived for many years at 12 (now 12a), Berkeley-square, to which I referred recently, was a stalwart figure invariably depicted in coloured prints of the period wearing a blue and white-spotted stock. He was also devoted to cock-fighting, and often pleaded in print that its cruelties were much exaggerated.

### An Artist on Wrinkles.

The statement by Fiddes Watt, the Scottish portrait painter, that women do not care for their character to appear in portraits of themselves because character is shown in wrinkles and furrows, fills me with amazement.

The truth is surely that character in a face is a matter of structure and expression. Wrinkles denote not character but age (which, of course, is why women dislike them); and the corollary of Mr. Watt's dictum is that only old women have character, which is obviously absurd.

We all know young women whose gallant spirit shines in their faces though time has not yet traced a single line, and we know old women with accordion-pleated faces who look and are as stupid as can be.

### Transfiguration in the Glens.

Now that it is known how the proposed Grampan hydro-electric scheme will probably affect Glen Affric, Glee Cannich and Glen Strathfarrar and the lovely Falls of Glomach, there is some local gloom, but the Grampan Electricity Supply Bill is to be reintroduced in the autumn.

Meanwhile, in Ireland, great changes are going on through the progress of the Shannon scheme. At Ardaraubha a powerhouse has been built by the German contractors in the most modern Continental manner, and very strange it must look in that quiet landscape which has lain lonely and unchanged for so long.

### The Queen's Holiday.

The Queen has found more leisure than usual during her stay at Sandringham, and besides her usual woollen crocheted work, which may be picked up at odd moments, has been decorating little painted bowls as gifts for her friends.

The bowls have been first painted in various colours, ready for the adornment of little flower-wreaths and other devices which the Queen is amused to find, after neglecting paint-brushes for a long time, she can still apply deftly.

### Compulsory Motoring Insurance.

The case in the Bristol Registry Court of a man against whom £1625 damages had been awarded to a plaintiff injured by his motorcar, emphasises the grave moral responsibility of insurance by anybody who drives a car.

It must be poor comfort to a victim of an accident, who has been disabled and perhaps disfigured for life, to be told that the driver of the car is uninsured and unable to pay.

A few more cases of this kind would bring a clamour for compulsory insurance for motorists.

### The Safe Season.

At the holiday lull, connoisseurs are again being excited by the advance news of the forthcoming art sales.

The re-shuffling of English property which has gone on since the war is by no means ended, and a great deal of household gear, hitherto undisturbed for centuries, will pass through the London auction rooms before Christmas.

The sale of Hurstmeaneux Castle takes place next month, and the furniture and tapestry which the late Lieut-colonel Claude Lowther had there will be sold in the castle itself.

### A Restaurant Reflection.

One of the cinema theatres are now faced with the problem of providing them with the proper acoustic qualities for the talking films. One device to this end, of which I hear is an acoustic property which reduces metallic noises.

How I wish some of our restaurateurs would give more attention to acoustics and make use of some of these new inventions so that conversation in a natural tone would still be possible at their tables.

The acoustics of a restaurant can be easily spoiled. Sometimes a new scheme of decoration turns a hitherto comfortable place into one where anybody has to shout at the top of their voices.

### Food Safety.

A counsel of perfection is recommended by the Medical Research Council in a survey on food poisoning, which advises the boiling before consumption of all preserved foods in order to prevent botulism.

Obviously the boiling of many preserved foods is impracticable, while in others I fancy the risk will generally be taken rather than the trouble, for after all preserved foods are used largely to save cooking.

But in the case of ham, the warning should not be without effect. Ham may be particularly dangerous if kept for some time before being eaten.

### New Anaemia Treatment.

Something approaching a sensation was caused in medical circles not long ago by the discovery that liver substance, preferably raw, would cure pernicious anaemia.

Now my medical friend assures me that the very latest claim is that dried hog stomach produces an even more beneficial effect on pernicious anaemia than liver.

The new discovery is being tested in America. Meanwhile, liver substance is, I gather, giving very satisfactory results in this country.

### Lacoste's Romance.

I cannot recall an engagement richer in international sporting interest than that of René Lacoste and Miss Simone Thion de la Chaume, one of whom has won supreme honours in British lawn tennis and the other in our golf.

Such names as Bundy, Godfree, Lycett, and Beamish are evidence of the frequency of marriages among players in the same branch of sport. But the racket and the club are seldom united.

The Lacoste and the de la Chaume families are both wealthy. Business and ill-health have limited Lacoste's tennis of late. Now marriage, coupled with a natural desire to dabble in golf, may help to remove him prematurely from his place in the ranks of the "Three Musketeers."